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SUBJECT: GUINEAN GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTS CAMPAIGN FINANCING
PROGRAM

11. (SBU) SUMMARY. The Guinean Government finally implemented the political party subsidy program envisioned in the May 2007 revisions to the country,s electoral code. The ruling party received one-third of the total \$300,000 allotment while the rest of the money was spread thinly among the other 48 parties. Opposition leaders have criticized the process, claiming that the distributions unfairly favored the ruling party while simultaneously propping up a host of small parties that lack popular support. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) In accordance with the May 2007 revisions to Guinea,s electoral code, the Government of Guinea distributed a total of 1.5 billion GnF (\$300,000) in subsidies to 49 registered political parties. Although the law included a complicated formula for determining individual allotments, the political parties met with the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) and agreed to amend the distribution mechanism. According to contacts, half of the funds were shared equally among all 49 parties. The rest of the funds were distributed according to how many deputies the party had at the National Assembly, the party,s participation in national elections since 1992, the party,s total number of elected officials nationwide, and the party,s total number of women in elected positions.

13. (SBU) Contacts from the major opposition parties, including the RPG (Rally for the Guinean People), the UPR (Union for Progress and Renewal), and the UPG (Union for Guinean Progress), criticized the subsidy program for favoring the ruling PUP (Party for Unity and Progress) and for unfairly propping up minor opposition parties. UPG President Jean Marie Dore told POL LES that the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs (MATAP) had allowed various political parties to register, but did not verify that those parties had met the legal requirements detailed in the electoral code. According to Dore, a number of political parties only registered so that they could obtain access to the new government subsidies. (COMMENT. The UPG won three seats in the National Assembly, but refused to accept them because of allegations of elections fraud. END COMMENT).

14. (SBU) The Secretary General of the RPG, Dr. Diane, said that it was inappropriate to consider a party,s number of elected officials since Guinea has never held free and fair elections that truly reflect the interests of the people. He added that a party,s participation in the electoral process should not have been a factor because the process has never been transparent. (COMMENT. Although one of the largest opposition parties, the RPG has boycotted elections in the past and holds few elected positions. END COMMENT.)

15. (SBU) A member of the UPR,s Executive Bureau, Cherif Abdourahim, said that the UPR,s share of the subsidy was insignificant when compared to the party,s commitment to the democratic cause in Guinea. Cherif emphasized that the UPR

had participated in all national and local elections since 1992, despite problems with fraud and transparency. He told POL LES that the UPR deserved far more money than it received. (COMMENT. The UPR is the only opposition party represented in the National Assembly, holding 20 of 114 seats, although it has claimed that it was cheated out of a significant number of additional seats. END COMMENT.)

16. (SBU) Based on the agreed upon distribution mechanism, the ruling PUP received the lion's share of the funds, approximately \$101,000, or one-third of the total subsidy. The PUP's allies, also known as La Mouvance, received another \$24,000. The opposition UPR received the second largest allotment, after the PUP, of \$26,000. Distributions among other major opposition parties were as follows: RPG - \$13,000, UFR - \$8500, UPG - \$7000, and UFDG - \$5488. A number of parties received equal allotments of \$5000 reflecting their share of the first half of the funds, and a small share of the second half because of participation in previous elections. Thirteen recently established parties received about \$1000 each, which was a percentage of the \$2500 lump sum allotment given to each of the older parties.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) The political parties have been arguing amongst themselves about how to distribute the funds since the revision to the electoral code was passed more than a year ago. Most of Guinea's political parties are very small, in many cases representing no more than a couple hundred

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members. The original electoral revision did not provide for equal disbursements to all parties. According to opposition party contacts, the main reason behind the subsidy program was to give major opposition parties the financial means to more effectively campaign against the powerful ruling party. However, the ultimate distribution decision was made in consultation with the CENI, within which the ruling PUP and its allies holds a clear majority with ten out of the twenty voting members. In the end, the PUP left with one-third of the money while the rest of the funds were distributed thinly among 48 other parties, with three of the four major opposition parties receiving little more than the rest of the group. END COMMENT.
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